Constitution and Bylaws
of the Graduate Student Senate at Lehigh University
Approved March 28, 2007
Amended February 27, 2008
Amended February 13, 2013
Amended February 26, 2014
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**I) Name**
The name of this association shall be the Graduate Student Senate (GSS).

**II) Objectives**
The objectives of the Graduate Student Senate shall be the following:
1) To serve as the representing body of the graduate student community in all matters pertinent to the graduate programs and graduate student life at Lehigh University;
2) To provide graduate students with a forum to discuss issues pertinent to the graduate programs and graduate student life at Lehigh University;
3) To encourage communication and social interaction among graduate students;
4) To acquire information from and circulate information to the graduate student community;
5) To provide graduate student representatives to university committees as requested.
6) To approve and present policy to the Graduate and Research Committee, Educational Policy Committee, other University bodies, the Provost, the President of the University, or the Board of Trustees;
7) To provide the Graduate and Research Committee, Educational Policy Committee, other University bodies, Provost, President of the University, and the Board of Trustees with a forum to discuss issues with Graduate Students, and to prepare position papers, when they so request;
8) To promote academic achievement and professionalism within the graduate student community;
9) To enhance the visibility of the Lehigh graduate student programs to increase interest among undergraduate and professional organizations.
10) To provide a communicative body to act as a liaison between LU faculty, staff and organizations and the graduate student body at large.

**III) Meetings and Membership**

**A) General Assembly**
The Graduate Student Senate General Assembly shall be defined as any meeting advertised at least three (3) days in advance and open to all graduate students.

**B) Membership**
1) Each Graduate Unit may have two (2) graduate student representatives as members of the Graduate Student Senate except in the case when one unit is comprised of more than 2 departments. When this occurs, each department in that unit will be allowed one representative.
   (a) Units Representatives may be appointed by their respective departments or be elected by departmental student associations.
   (b) Only Unit Representatives may participate during a vote by the Graduate Student Senate.
   (c) If a Unit Representative is unable to attend a meeting of the General Assembly, the representative may designate a proxy to act in his or her stead. All rights and responsibilities of the Unit Representative shall be granted to the proxy.
   (d) Executive board members can serve as unit representatives to their respective units and hold the same voting privileges as all unit representatives.
2) Graduate Units shall be recognized by the Graduate Student Senate on the basis of attendance at meetings of the General Assembly.
   (a) Any Unit that has attended at least 75% of the general meetings in the previous academic year shall be considered an active Unit.
   (b) Any Unit that fails to attend at least 75% of the meetings in a given academic year shall be considered an inactive Unit. To re-activate a unit, representatives must attend 75% of meeting in one semester, and then email ingss@lehigh.edu to request unit reactivation.
   (c) Inactive Units have no privileges of membership. Inactive Units shall not be permitted to vote, or receive travel grants. Inactive units shall not count towards a quorum.
   (d) Attendance shall be counted starting with the second meeting of the Fall semester, and shall end with the last meeting in April.
   (e) An inactive Unit may reactivate if they increase their attendance to at least 75%.
   (f) Exceptions to the Unit attendance policy may be granted, upon petition, by the Executive Board with the approval of the General Assembly.

C) Graduate Units

1) Graduate Units shall be assigned to each College based on the number of full time students enrolled in each Department. One (1) Unit shall be assigned for every 35 full-time students. The distribution of Units shall be re-evaluated once every three (3) year using enrollment statistics provided by the Office of the Registrar for academic years beginning in calendar years that are evenly divisible by three (e.g. 06-07, 09-10).

2) Graduate unit reps are required to participate in meetings and communicate information to other unit constituents and convey issues brought to them by their constituents to the general assembly. It is highly encouraged the reps participate in other university committees.

3) The following list defines the current distribution of Graduate Units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Reps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>American Studies, History</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biology, Behavioral Neuroscience, Integrative Biology, Molecular Biology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Chemistry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Earth and Environmental Science, and Environmental Policy Design</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics, Statistics, Applied Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociology, Social Psychology, Psychology, Political Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economics</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finance, Analytical Finance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economics, Management, and all others</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Educational Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparative and International Education, Globalization and Educational Change</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling and Human Services, Counseling Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special education, Elementary Education, Secondary Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching and Learning, Learning Sciences and Technology, Instructional Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Biological Engineering, Biological Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil and Environmental Engineering, Structural Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer Science and Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Care Systems, Energy Systems Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Industrial Engineering, Industrial Systems Engineering, Info and Systems Engineering, Quality Engineering</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manufacturing Systems, Management Science and Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering, Computational and Engineering Mechanics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polymer Science and Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D) Quorum
Quorum shall be defined as having 50% of the active Graduate Units represented at a meeting along with three Executive Board members. No business may be conducted without a quorum.

E) Rules of Order
1) Graduate Student Senate meetings shall be run informally unless a majority of those present at the meeting vote to operate under parliamentary procedure. At such time, the rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Graduate Student Senate in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws or special rules of order of the Graduate Student Senate.

2) For all matters of business pertaining to this association, a simple majority vote shall be defined as more than half of the votes cast on any measure. The simple majority shall not include abstentions.

IV) Executive Board

A) Function
1) To support and enforce the Constitution and Bylaws;
2) To propose a Constitution or Bylaws amendment when the need arises;
3) To approve all communications of the Graduate Student Senate;
4) To prepare the agenda for the Graduate Student Senate meetings;
5) Each Eboard member must take leadership on one event per year.

B) Membership
1) The voting membership shall consist of the seven (7) officers. Each officer shall have only one vote. Executive Board officers shall not have voting privileges on matters of business brought to the General Assembly.
2) The Graduate Student Senate Advisor, normally the Graduate Life Office Director, and the Graduate Assistant shall be non-voting members of the Executive Board.
3) Any Executive Board voting member may call for a formal vote on any Executive Board issue.
4) Any Lehigh University graduate student shall be eligible to hold a GSS Executive Board position.
5) A student may concurrently hold an Executive Board position in a GSS-funded graduate organization and any GSS Executive Board except for the office of GSS Treasurer.

C) Elected Officers
1) President: The President shall represent the graduate student community in all matters pertinent to graduate student life at Lehigh University. In this capacity, the President shall serve as a liaison between the Graduate Student Senate and the University administration. The President shall uphold the Constitution and Bylaws and has authority over the implementation of Graduate Student Senate policy, as guided by the Graduate Student Senate and with the approval of the Executive Board. The President presides over meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Board. The President and the Vice President shall prepare the Graduate Student Senate annual report. The President shall assist the graduate life director in interviewing and hiring a graduate assistant.
2) Vice-President: In the event the President resigns or is unable to perform a particular duty, the Vice-President shall be prepared to act as President of the Graduate Student Senate. The Vice President shall also perform various duties as directed by the Executive Board and President. In coordination with the Executive Board, the Vice President shall appoint graduate students to serve as Graduate Members on Lehigh University committees. The Vice President shall also serve as a liaison to all ad-hoc Graduate Student Senate committees.
3) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be responsible for drafting and maintaining the budget and any other financial records of the Graduate Student Senate. The Treasurer shall also serve as the primary liaison to the graduate clubs.
4) Secretary: The Secretary shall be responsible for Graduate Student Senate meeting minutes and shall monitor Unit and club rep attendance. The Secretary shall be the coordinator for Graduate Student Senate unit and club rep communication and shall encourage participation from all Graduate Units. The Secretary shall notify all units and clubs of their attendance stand after each semester.
5) Travel Grant Officer: The Grant Officer shall be in charge of the Travel Grants, and shall work closely with the Treasurer and Budget Committee.
6) Historian: The Historian shall keep records of events organized by the Graduate Student Senate. The Historian shall also record the efforts and accomplishments of the Graduate Student Senate.
7) **Communications Officer:** The communications officer shall be responsible for updating the GSS website and email list, Facebook page, alumni correspondence column, send meeting and event announcements, update GSS brochure as needed.

**D) Resignations and Vacancies**
1) Resignations shall be accepted by the President, or in the case of the President’s resignation, by the Secretary.
2) If for any reason an executive board officer is no longer a registered graduate student, the position will become vacant.
3) Should any Executive Board office become vacant for any reason less than one (1) month before the regularly-scheduled elections, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the vacant position until a new officer is elected.
4) Should any Executive Board office become vacant for any reason more than one (1) month before the regularly-scheduled elections, the following procedure shall be employed to fill the position. The vacancy shall be announced at the next meeting of the General Assembly and the floor shall be opened for nominations at that meeting. At the next regular meeting, the floor shall again be opened for nominations and the vacancy shall be filled immediately by election.
5) Should the office of President become vacant, the Vice President shall immediately assume the position of President and a new Vice President shall be elected according to the procedure outlined above.
6) In the case of resignation of the President and a vacant Vice-President position, the President’s duties shall be assumed by another officer until a new President has been elected. The order for this temporary succession shall be: Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Officer, Grant Officer and Historian.
7) If a vacancy occurs and no nominations for that position have been received, the Executive Board may appoint an interim officer or distribute the duties of the vacant position amongst the remaining officers. An interim officer shall not have voting privileges on the Executive Board.

**V) Elections**

**A) Election Timeline**
Candidates for Executive Board positions shall be nominated at the third to last General Assembly meeting of the academic year. After this meeting, nominations will be officially closed. Before the next meeting, all candidates shall submit a statement of intent and personal photo within 24 hours of nomination that will be posted on the Graduate Student Senate website. The Unit Representatives shall review the statements of intent in preparation for the election meeting. Elections shall be held at the second to last General Assembly meeting of the academic year. During the election proceedings, the nominees will answer questions posed by the general assembly. Any graduate student in attendance may ask questions to the candidate. Question sessions will be conducted in groups based on position. Packets with nominees’ names, photos, statements of intent, space for notes will be distributed to graduate students in attendance. Voting shall take place by electronic ballot, which will be distributed to unit reps following the Question Session, and will be available until 10 pm that night. Elected officers shall assume their positions at the final Graduate Student Senate meeting of the academic year.
B) Authority during Elections
1) Election proceedings shall be governed by the appointed election committee. The election committee consists of 1 representative from each college who is graduating at the end of the semester. The Graduate Life Director shall serve as the supervisor of the committee and will serve as the tie-breaker in the case of a disputed decision by the committee. Among the election committee, an announcer, and records keeper will be chosen.
2) The announcer shall preside over the election proceedings. The President may serve as the announcer only if he or she is not running for office. Otherwise, any other outgoing Executive Board member may serve as the announcer.
3) The record keepers shall coordinate with the Graduate Assistant to distribute ballots and count and record the election results. The record keepers shall be two students who are not running for office, including one outgoing Executive Board member and one other student who is not voting in the election. In the absence of any non-running Executive Board members, a graduate student who is not running for office and not voting in the election can perform those duties.
4) The supervisor of the election shall be the Graduate Student Senate Advisor, normally the Graduate Life Office Director. The supervisor shall ensure that the election procedure is followed, oversee the counting of votes, and certify the election results.

C) Nomination Procedures
1) Nominations shall be taken in the following order: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Officer, Grants Officer, and Historian.
2) For each position, the current officer shall give a brief introduction to the duties involved for that post.
3) The announcer shall then ask for nominations. Any graduate student can be a nominee. All nominations must be seconded by at least one Unit Representative. Candidates may be nominated even if they are absent from the nomination meeting. A nomination of an absentee candidate must be accepted by the candidate in writing.
   (a) Nominees’ names shall be recorded by the record-keepers.
4) Steps 2 through 4 shall be repeated for each Executive Board office.
5) The maximum number of positions a graduate student can be nominated for is 2.
6) The names of the nominees shall be emailed to the Unit Representatives and posted on the Graduate Student Senate website.

D) Statement of Intent
Each nominee shall submit a statement of intent and personal photo to the Graduate Student Senate. These statements shall be limited to one page and may describe the nominees’ qualifications for the position and discuss the nominees’ plans if elected. The election announcer and supervisor shall set a submission deadline for the statements of intent. After the deadline, the communications officer will post all received statements on the Graduate Student Senate website and no further submissions will be accepted. If the need arises, the Graduate Student Senate Advisor may require any candidate to submit verification from the Dean of Students Office that the student has not violated the University Code of Conduct and has good academic standing.

E) Campaign Policies
1) Campaign Policies
   a. The election committee and Graduate Life Director shall reserve the right to
      declare any candidates name stricken from the ballot for specific violations of
      campaign or election rules and regulations. Campaigning is not required or expected.

2) Posters
   a. Posters may only be displayed at designated areas on campus.
   b. Contents must be ethical and appropriate in nature.
   c. Inappropriate posters or content determined by the Campaign Committee will
      immediately be removed and the candidate may be disqualified from elections. If
      you are not sure, please submit it to the committee for review
   d. Removal of opponents’ posters prior to or on Election Day may result in the
      disqualification of the candidates regardless of direct involvement.

3) Email
   a. Candidates or a candidate’s supporters are not permitted to send mass emails
      (defined as 5 or more recipients).
   b. Campaign materials and announcements may be posted to social media sites, and
      may be included in GLO and university announcements.

4) Negative Campaigning
   a. Under no circumstances or at any time will negative propaganda be permitted.
   b. Candidates, directly or indirectly involved, may be disqualified if found guilty by
      the election committee.
   c. If a candidate’s supporters take part in negative campaigning of any form, the
      candidate may be disqualified.

5) Campaign Events
   a. A campaign event is defined as an event to introduce a candidate, or hold a
      discussion on the candidate’s platform outside of the candidate’s campaign
      committee
   b. All campaign events must be open to all graduate students.
   c. Campaign events must fall within the spending limits outlined in section F
   d. No alcohol is permitted at campaign events.

6) Spending Limits
   a. The spending limit on any campaign related activity (making posters, hosting
      events, etc.) must not exceed $50
   b. Candidates are required to save receipts as they can be subject to review by
      election committee.

F) Eligible Voters
1) Two (2) Unit Representatives from each active Graduate Unit shall be allowed to vote in
   elections.
2) If a Unit Representative cannot attend the election meeting, the representative may
   designate a proxy to act in his or her stead. Proxies must be named in writing before the
   start of the election meeting.
3) If a unit rep resigns or for any reason is no longer a registered graduate student at Lehigh,
   it becomes the responsibility of that unit to assign a new unit rep and inform the GSS
   executive board.
4) If an active Graduate Unit has a named Unit Representative who has attended less than
   two (2) General Assembly meetings in the same semester as the election meeting, another
student from that Unit may petition in writing to receive voting privileges in place of the named Unit Representative. The petitioning student must have attended at least two (2) General Assembly meetings in the same semester as the election. Petitions must be received before the day of the election.

G) Voting Procedures
1) Voting shall be conducted by electronic ballot. Each office shall have a separate ballot. Each ballot shall list the title of the position and the name(s) of the candidate(s). Each ballot shall also have a write-in blank and voting boxes marked “Abstain” and “No Confidence.”
2) Each eligible voter shall receive a packet containing the ballots for all positions.
3) Voting shall start as soon as the general assembly meeting where candidates are questioned ends, and will remain open until 10 pm that night. The order of elections shall be as follows: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Officer, Grants Officer, and Historian.
4) At the general assembly meeting, for each position, the announcer shall read the names of the candidates for that position. Each candidate will have the opportunity to address the General Assembly. After each speech, the announcer will lead a time-limited question-and-answer period with the candidate. All candidates shall leave the voting room and the announcer will lead a discussion of the candidates by the General Assembly.
5) To win an election, a candidate must receive a simple majority vote, or more than half of the votes counted. Abstentions shall not be counted. Votes of “No Confidence” shall be counted. In the event of a tie between the two candidates with the most votes, a run-off election between those two candidates will take place immediately. If the candidate with the most votes does not win the simple majority and the second and third candidates are tied, a run-off election between the top three candidates will take place immediately. If a runoff election is necessary, it will be conducted electronically.
6) If only one person is running for a position, the candidate must still receive a simple majority vote to win the election.
7) The results of each election shall be announced immediately before voting begins for the next position.
8) After the elections, the results shall be emailed to all Unit Representatives and posted on the Graduate Student Senate website.
9) In the event of an immediate post-election resignation, a new election for that position will take place at the last meeting of the academic year.

VI) Impeachment

A) Criteria for Impeachment
An elected officer of the Graduate Student Senate may be impeached for nonperformance of duty (defined as absence of performance) or for willful misconduct of office if a signed petition of charges is presented by five (5) Unit Representatives of the Graduate Student Senate and by two (2) members of the Executive Board. Such petition of charges shall be presented at either a regular meeting of the General Assembly or at an Executive Board meeting.

B) Governance of Impeachment Procedures
1) If a signed impeachment petition has been brought against an officer, he or she shall be suspended from duty immediately. The duties of the suspended officer shall be fulfilled by another Executive Board officer until the matter has been resolved. The suspended officer shall not enter the Graduate Student Senate into any obligation or contract and shall not receive reimbursement for expenses incurred after the presentation of impeachment charges to the General Assembly.

2) The Executive Board shall designate an officer to preside over the impeachment proceedings.

3) The presiding officer shall convene a special meeting for the sole purpose of hearing the charges against the officer. The time, date, and place of the meeting shall be ratified by the Graduate Student Senate, and the Graduate Student Senate should attempt to ensure that the defendant can be present at the meeting. The meeting shall occur no sooner than 6 days after the charges are read, nor any later than 32 days thereafter.

4) The presiding officer shall also designate the regular meeting at which the vote shall be taken on the charges. This regular meeting shall be held at least 6 days after the special meeting, but no more than 32 days thereafter.

5) If an accused officer is not present when the charges are read against him or her are read, the presiding officer shall immediately inform the accused officer in person of the charges, but must do so at least three (3) days prior to the hearing meeting date. If, as may be the case, the officer cannot be reached, a certified signature-required letter shall suffice. If such a letter is not deliverable to the address the University holds for the accused officer, the officer shall be automatically removed from office. If such a letter is delivered, then the start date for the above timetable shall be the date the letter is received.

6) At the special session for impeachment hearing, a quorum shall be determined as provided in the Constitution, unless either the defendant is absent or all the accusing petitioners are absent. In such a case, the presence of the presiding officer alone shall be enough to constitute a quorum.

7) At the hearing, the accusing petitioners shall be allowed to make an opening statement, and the defendant shall be allowed a rebuttal, neither of which shall be longer than ten (10) minutes. The charges shall then be discussed and debated as moderated by the presiding officer in order to determine whether any offense has been committed and if an offense has been committed, whether removal from office is warranted. Closing arguments up to five (5) minutes in length shall also be accepted, with the defendant going last.

8) If at this time the General Assembly believes more discussion is warranted, the presiding officer shall call another special session for that purpose, but this shall be done only once before a vote must be taken.

9) The General Assembly shall then vote on whether to convict or acquit the defendant. A vote to convict shall require a 3/4 majority. If convicted, the defendant shall be removed from office immediately and the process for replacement begun. Upon acquittal, the status of the acquitted officer shall be as if no charges had been brought.

10) No officer shall be tried twice for the same offense. If more than one officer is to be impeached, separate petitions of charges must be read, and separate special sessions held.

VIII) Standing Committees
Units Reps and attendees from their college shall form task groups to designate representatives to the budget committee and other standing committees. This will ensure academic diversity in all committees.

A) Budget
The Budget Committee shall draft the operating budget according to the rules defined in the Fiscal Governance Policies of the Graduate Student Senate.

IX) Ratification
Ratification of this Constitution requires a vote of three-fourths of the Graduate Student Senate representatives present. One to two weeks after the vote, an open meeting for all Graduate Students shall be held. A simple majority vote will be required for ratification.

X) Amendment

A) Formal Amendment
Amendment of this Constitution and Bylaws requires a vote of three-fourths of the Unit Representatives present at a General Assembly meeting. One week after the vote, an open meeting for all Graduate Students shall be held. A simple majority vote will be required for amendment. Any amendment shall be dated and recorded. A copy of the former Constitution and Bylaws shall be filed for future reference and all changes shall be incorporated into the document posted on the Graduate Student Senate website.

B) Minor Updates
This Constitution shall be reviewed and, if needed, updated every five years. Changes in committee names, titles, etc. shall be incorporated into this Constitution without above amendment process, provided there is no change in intent or policy.

XI) Dissolution
A three-fourths vote of all current representatives is required. Dissolution must have been moved and seconded at a previous Graduate Student Senate meeting. One two weeks after the vote, an open meeting for all Graduate Students will be held. A simple majority vote is required for dissolution.